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THE
Secret History
OF THE
S C E P T E R,
OR THE
Court INTRIGUES
In the Late REIGN.

Accipitres pugnant dulce loquuntur aves.



L O N D O N :
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THE
Secret History
OF THE
S C E P T E R, &c.

TH E S C E P T E R among the Regalia, is esteem'd the Emblem or Ensign of the Civil Administration, as the *Sword* is of the Executive Power, or the *Crown* is of the Majesty of the Prince.

By putting the *Crown* upon the Prince's Head, he is cloth'd with the Dignity and Authority of a *SOVEREIGN*: And the first A&T of the Subject, after the *Crown* is so plac'd upon the Head of their King, is to come and do him Homage.

In some Kingdoms, in *Spain* for Example, so soon as the *Crown* is plac'd on the Head of their Monarch, the Archbishop turns the King round to shew him to the

People, and the Heralds proclaim, BE.
HOLD THE KING!

When the King is thus crown'd, the *Sword* is put into his Hand, signifying Power, and then the *SCEPTER* denoting *PEACE*.

These *Three* are inseparable from the Office of a Monarch: By his Dignity and Majesty, represented by the *Crown*, He is plac'd in a Superior Station, entitled to the Subjection of his People, and cloath'd with a Right to command them. By the *Sword* he is vested with Power; which Power is to be employ'd to defend and protect them, and to execute Justice upon such of them as offend: And by the *SCEPTER* He is suppos'd to administer all the Parts of Civil Government in Times of Peace.

This Administration contains many Particulars, such as,

Distributing Justice between Man and Man.

Hearing Petitions.

Redressing Publick Grievances.

Maintaining Correspondencies Abroad.

Encouraging Commerce.

Enacting

Enacting wholesome Laws.

Preserving the Liberties of the People,
and the *Just Rights* of the Crown.

Supporting Religion : And briefly, doing
every Thing needful to the Publick Tran-
quility, and the General Good of the
Country.

The *S C F P T E R* seems to be the most
essential Part of the Monarch ; without
which, the *Crown* and the *Sword* are in-
significant Trophies of Monarchy : The
S C E P T E R is the End and Reason, tho'
not the Cause of the Dignity and Power.

In the due Exercise of the Kingly Office,
these *Three* are inseparable from one ano-
ther, and ought to be inseparable from the
Person of the Sovereign, never to be de-
mitted from the Throne. It is true, the
First never can be separated from the Per-
son of the Prince : He that lays down the
Crown, lays down the King ; the Office
fails not to go along with the Ensigns of
the Office ; but as to the *Sword* and
S C E P T E R, it has not been always so :
Princes have frequently thought fit to com-
mit them, *too much*, to the Direction and
Management of a Third Hand, but espe-
cially the *S C E P T E R* : Yet this is very
seldom

seldom done, but first or last it tends to the Dishonour and Dissatisfaction of the Prince, and to the Injury of the Subject, of which frequent Examples will occur to us in the following History.

Whenever any of our Princes have thought fit, to act so beneath the Office of a Sovereign, as to commit either the *Sword* or the *SCEPTER* to the Conduct of a Subject, it has never fail'd to produce bad Effects to themselves and to their Subjects: And if we were to search far into History, we should find that almost all the Divisions and Civil Strife, which have happen'd in this Nation, have been the Consequences of separating the *Sword* and the *SCEPTER* from the *Crown*.

Sometimes it has been occasion'd by the Encroachment and Ambition of the Subjects, who have endeavour'd to take the *SCEPTER* out of the Prince's Hand; as in the Case of our Civil Wars, from the Baron-Wars, to the late unhappy Breach in the Reign of King *Charles I.* wherein the *Sword* especially was separated from the *Crown* by the successful Violence of the Subject, in Rebellion.

Sometimes it is occasion'd by the Ease Monarch's committing the *SCEPTER* into the Hands of Favourites, on Pretence of delivering themselves from the Burthen

of the Administration ; and this has been the Foundation of all the Factions, which have agitated these Kingdoms for some Ages, and by which we are devolv'd almost *entirely into the Government of Parties.*

Of this Evil this History shall give some brief Account ; especially as it relates to what has past among us for the last Three or Four Reigns, in which more than Ever, our Monarchs have supinely given up the *S C E P T E R* into the Hands of their Ministers of State ; and they again, for the obtaining and keeping it in their Hands, have fill'd us with the constant Intrigues of Parties to the Destruction of the Publick Peace, and exposing the Kingdom to the unsatisfy'd Avarice of Statesmen and Politicians ; who on every Side have made Shipwreck of the Publick to support themselves, and have wasted the Subject to preserve their private Interest.

After the Civil War was over, wherein Tumult had separated the *Sword* from the *Crown*, and at last turn'd its Edge against the Sovereign ; the Restoration of King *Charles II.* together with the Person of the King, restor'd the Sovereignty in all its Parts ; and setting the Crown upon his Head, he had the *Sword* and *S C E P T E R* too put into his Hands.

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The *Sword, Good Man,* he made as little use of, as he could, for Reasons which every One was then satisfy'd with ; particularly that the Kingdom having been tir'd with War, the People were sated with Blood, and every One embrac'd Peace with a Willingness, natural to Nations exhausted by Armies ; this made it worth no Man's while to seek having the *Sword* put into his Hands in that Reign.

But the *S C E P T E R* had another Fate ; the Prince, a Man of Pleasure, and given up to a Luxurious, Effeminate Course, went a great Length, in drawing the Nation after him into a General Debauchery, till the loose Reins of Government hanging down, the *S C E P T E R* became a Prey to a *Popish* Party, in the Person of the Duke of York. What dismal Consequences happen'd in the latter End of the Reign of this Prince, from the secret Designs of a *Popish* and Tyrannick Party, who acted under the Shadow, and by the Influence of that Duke, while the *S C E P T E R* was thus given up into his Hands, let the Burning of *London*, the ~~Barbarities~~ in *Scotland*, the Innocent Blood shed in the Streets of *London*, and the Cross of *Edinburgh* bear Witness of ; whilst the King, who was the best natur'd Man, as well as the most merciful King in the World, supinely doz'd in the Arms, and

and by the Witchcraft of a Wh—re, suffering the Blood of his People to be shed by him, who had, as we may say, snatch'd the *S C E P T E R* out of his Hand.

The Reason of going back to this flagrant Example is, that I may, in the more lively Manner, represent to the present Age, this great Truth, and which will, with a double Force, recur to us in the Use of this History, viz. That *the best Prince may become as fatal to a Nation, as the worst Tyrant, when once he suffers himself to be perswaded to separate the S C E P T E R from the C R O W N, and commit the Civil Administration to the Hands of a Subject.*

I might enlarge usefully, upon this Example of King *Charles II.* especially as it was carryed on to an Extream, which, we have some Reason to say, has been our Case since, tho' not in so great a Degree, viz. That this Easy, Good-natur'd Prince, having, as is said above, given the *S C E P T E R* into the Hands of his Brother, became so divested of the Power of Government, that he could never re-assume it again ; and if Fame lies not, he lost his Life in the Attempt : Something like this will be seen in the subsequent Cases of which this History may speak, tho' we may not run it to so great a Length.

When King *Charles II.* whether by fair or foul Play, is not the present Case, was peaceably laid in his Grave, the Coronation-Act gravely brought these Three great Friends, the *Sword*, the *SCEPTER* and the *Crown* together again; and as they put One upon his Head, they put the Other into his Hands, if he could have been so much Master of himself as to have kept them. But it was not the Fate of the Family to Rule by themselves; nor could the Sense and Remembrance of the Advantage, which He had over his Brother in the preceding Reign, by taking the *SCEPTER* out of his Hands, nor the Meanness of the Figure, which his Brother made on that Account, no, nor the Fate of the *Crown*, in Consequence of his managing the *SCEPTER* warn Him, to prevent his own Ruin by the Consequence of the same Folly; but supinely fancying himself secure on his Throne, He gave up the *SCEPTER* into the Hands of those *worst of Statesmen*, the *Priests*; nay, into the Hands of those *worst of Priests* the *Romish*; nay, yet worse, into the Hands of those *worst of Romish Priests* the *Jesuits*.

What was the Issue of their separating the *SCEPTER* from the *Crown* in King *James's Reign*, it needs not that this History should repeat. We cannot say, that

the King repented of it at all ; no, not under his Sufferings on that Account : But it must be acknowledg'd, This blindness was owing to the Extream of Zeal, which that Prince had for the *Romish Church*, and for their *Clergy*, which some, more unkind to him, call *BIGOTTRY* : But it should not be forgotten, That he was not the first of his Family, that had been a Martyr to his Affection for the *Clergy*, and had laid down his Life at the Feet of the *Church*.

The Kingdom reap'd the Benefit of this Pious Folly in the Revolution ; but with this Disadvantage, *viz.* That Custom had naturaliz'd the Method of demitting the *SCEPTER*, by the Sovereign into the Hands of his Servants ; and in the next Reign, the Courtiers did not so much labour to have the Practice continu'd, as to form themselves into Parties, to secure it to themselves, and prevent One another ; taking it for a receiv'd Maxim in Government, That the King would keep the *Crown* upon his Head, and perhaps being a Martial Prince, would take the Management of the *Sword* into his own Hand ; but for the *SCEPTER*, that was their Province, and they were *Sure* of it.

They were not mistaken in their Guess, tho' it was not from the Inclination of the King, to have it so, as it had been in the preceding Reign, but from an Acci-

dent in the King's Circumstances, which made it impossible to be otherwise for a while. The King was a Stranger tho' not an Alien : He was of the Blood Royal in a collateral Line, but of a Foreign and Female Branch ; having been bred abroad, and never having been here before, except once at his Marriage of the Princess, it was impossible He should have a perfect Knowledge of Things, much less of Persons, as One brought up in the *English* Court might have : He knew as much of the Political Interest of *England*, and how it stood related to Foreign Interests and Nations, as any Prince in *Christendom* ; but when he came to Administration of Civil Affairs, He could not but be at some Loss, and was oblig'd to see with other Men's Eyes, and hear with Other Men's Ears, more than his own in almost every Thing that came before him.

This naturally devolv'd the *S C E P - T E R* into the Hands of the Subject, and Matters relating to the Civil Government, were necessarily committed to such Men, as his Majesty thought fittest to confide in.

The Choice of these Men was the Subject not of the King's Free-Will only, but of the whole Kingdom's Agency, and this put the Nation into that Flame of Parties which has never yet been extinguish'd, and

and which it is fear'd never will : Nay, such is the Fate of this unhappy Island, that it is hard to say, whether it would be well at this Time, that this Fire should be totally extinguished or no. Such is the natural Propensity of Mankind to exercise Power in a Tyrannical Manner, to the Prejudice of those, whom they have in Subjection to that Power, that it is doubtful whether the Check, every Party is to each other, is not needful to the whole, in Order to restrain them from Tyranny and Oppression.

It is true, when ever a Just Monarch, keeping the *SCEPTER* in his own Hands, shall rule without the Direction of his Ministers of State, I mean without their *Over-ruling Direction*, then indeed He may set his Foot on the Neck of this Hydra, and put an End to the very Name, as well as being of Parties in the Nation ; *HE AVEN say Amen to the Prayer, that it may be so.* History will serve to excite the Wishes of Good Men for such an Event, by shewing what Convulsions, in Matters Civil and Sacred, this Island has felt for want of such a Government, in the last Thirty Years.

It was full Three Years after the Revolution, when the King finding He had parted with the *SCEPTER* to some, who were not the best qualify'd to use it,
was

was oblig'd to shift Hands ; unhappy only in this, That the first Notice of his Mistake did not animadvert to his Majesty, That it was not so much an Errour to give the *SCEPTER* into the Hands of these Men and not those, as it was, that he gave it into any Hands out of his Own : That his Mistake was not in giving the *SCEPTER* to Men not qualify'd to use it, but in imagining, that any Subject could be qualify'd for it.

If there be any such Thing as, which Religious Men talk much of, viz. Of *Kings being the Lord's Anointed*, it seems to lie here, *Not in the Oyl Sacred at the Coronation of the Kings, but in being anointed from HEAVEN with the Spirit of Government*, of which the Sacred Oyl is the Emblem or Type only.

This Sacred Anointing, or Spirit of Government, is an Attribute, as incommutable as the Blood Royal ; and being Peculiar to those who are *born Kings*, the King can no more invest a Subject with it, than He can cause him to be a Branch of his Blood, or infuse the Royal Crimson into his Veins.

We will not dispute with any, whether there is such a Spirit of Government, such an Anointing from Heaven, peculiar to all Kings or no ; Without Doubt to some there has

has been, and by Consequence may be, and we believe is at this Day.

Now tho' the *SCEPTER* may be demitted to a Subject, and the Civil Administration be deputed by the Sovereign to his Ministers of State, as it too often has been; yet, He can make no Deputation of the Spirit of Government, the Paternal Genius of a King, the large extensive Soul of a Monarch, whose Eyes regard his whole Kingdom, and who cannot stoop to the mean narrow Views of Private Temper, or Self-Interested Designs: These are the incommunicable Attributes of a Royal Birth, and no Subject can receive them by Deputation.

Hence, when Ministers of State possess an exorbitant Share of the Royal Favour, and encroach thereby upon the Sovereignty, they very rarely, if ever, fail to descend to Oppression, Injustice, Avarice, and all the Consequences of the unbounded Lust of Ambition; and in the end, become Odious to the Princes themselves, and Intolerable to the People.

One Consequence of this is, That it very seldom has happen'd, That any Subject has engross'd the *SCEPTER* into his own Hands, and has manag'd it for the Good of his Country: A *disinterested States-Man* has been so seldom heard of, that History is very barren of such a Production;

duction ; and many Ages have pass'd since *ONE* has appear'd, that has really been so ; or if he has, that ever had the good Fortune to have it believed of him.

This is the Reason, that almost all the Favourites of Princes are made more remarkable for their heavy Fall, than their easie Rising ; and not One to an Age has gone off from the Stage, enjoying uninterrupted the full Favour of their Prince ; and which is yet more rare, not One in Fifty, who has been thus vested with the *SCEPTER* has been able to keep it, with the Approbation of the Subject, if they have enjoy'd that of their Prince.

From the Moral Observation, we return to the Narration of Fact, as by the Word *History* in the Title, it may be expected. King *William* having, as is noted, found that he had committed the *SCEPTER* to wrong Hands, fatally for him omitted that Just Reflection mentioned before, That it was wrong to commit it to any Hands at all ; but sought out for more proper Hands, to sway that weighty Engine of State : In which Enquiry something Fatal as well to the King himself, as to the whole Nation was to be observ'd.

First, This shifting the *SCEPTER* about from Hand to Hand, made it Cheap, Easie and Contemptible : The Dignity of
the

the Government was lost, and much of the Majesty of Government abated.

Secondly, The Subject liv'd in constant Broils One with another ; to share the Profits of the *S C E P T E R* was duly regarding the Duty of it.

First, This shifting the *S C E P T E R* from Hand to Hand, made it Cheap, Ease and Contemptible : The Dignity of the Government was lost, and much of the Majesty of Government abated. This appear'd, in that the *S C E P T E R* became at last subjected entirely to One of these Two Incidents. *First*, To the Party who had the Money. And *Secondly*, To the Majority of the House of C—s. By the first of these such scandalous Things were put upon the Government, and upon the King in that Reign, that no History can produce the like : The *C R O W N* became a general Mortgage to the City ; Deficiencies of Funds, and late Supplies, sent the Sovereign every Year a begging to the *Exchange* ; and the Treasury was the Monopoly of every Merchant, who had Credit to give Bills of Exchange.

By this Misfortune the Jobbers put the Dice upon the *Exchequer*, and the Publick Securities bore Discounts ; which if any private Merchant's Bills had gone at,

must have broke and given up; and had it not been powerfully rectify'd at last by P——t, by Engrōssment of the Bank, and other Measures, the Treasury and Exchequer must in Time have broke also.

The Influences, these Things had upon the Nation, were evident in that famous Strife between the New *East-India Company* and the Old; which tho' it was a Debate among a few Citizens and Merchants only at the first, yet was carry'd at last to that length, as to divide the *Court*, the *Government*, nay, even the *P——t* also, and the whole Nation; and had it gone on, the *S C E P T E R* must have been plac'd, not as This or That Party prevail'd in the *Court*, or in the *Council*; but as the *New Company* or the *Old* had prevail'd: And as the King said publickly, There was an absolute Necessity to unite the Two Companies, or to lay down the Government.

The Civil Government was not only influenc'd by Them, and the Houses of *P——t* influenc'd by Them, but even Elections began to be so far influenc'd by Them, that They sent Men to be chosen all over the Kingdom; and by the Strength of Money, and other Interests, had so many of the small *Burroughs* in their Management, that the Country Gentlemen were glad at last to solicit at *London* for the Assistance

of the Companies to preserve their Interest ; and to their Reproach be it said, too many apply'd to those Men to sell their Interest to such as were recommended to the Choice : And these Things came to such an height, that the Rates and Prices of Elections were settled upon the Exchange of *London*, or near it, as the Stocks of the Banks or Companies are now, and rose or fell, as the Managers were pleas'd to direct.

The King was too wise a Prince not to see these Things ; and having seen them, no Wise Prince could be Easie under them. What Remedies were possible to be apply'd, were apply'd; but the *SCEPTER* was not remov'd indeed, his Majesty's Affairs would not permit it : The Necessity of Money made it unavoidable to subject the *SCEPTER* too much to that Party, which could contribute most to the supplying the *Exchequer*.

In the next Place the House of C——s appear'd absolutely necessary to be regard'd, and as the *High* or *Low* Interest prevail'd there, so gradually They got hold of the *SCEPTER*; this too often oblig'd the King to depute the *SCEPTER* to those, whom otherwise He would not by his Choice have been concern'd with.

In this Variety, it is no Wonder if the Actions of the King past all manner of

Censure ; not only the Conduct of the Ministers was critically examin'd, and the Failings, they were at any Time suppos'd to be guilty of expos'd, but the King himself was reproach'd in an unusual Manner ; the Sincerity of his Designs, as well as the Wisdom of his Council reflected on, and every Publick Affair past the most severe Animadversions, according as those, who could not get, or could not keep the *S C E P T E R* in their Hands, thought fit to exclaim ; for the dispossess'd Party were always murmuring at the *Crown*.

If the *High* Party had the *S C E P T E R*, then the other complain'd that the King employ'd those whom He ought to have hang'd ; that He was in a Plot to bring in King *James*, and dethrone Himself ; that He bestow'd his Favours, and the Rewards of the Government on *Tories*, and on *Jacobites*, neglecting those who had made Him King, serv'd Him faithfully, and had stood by Him on all Occasions.

If the *Low* Party had the *S C E P T E R*, then the *Church* was turn'd up *Trump*, and the *Clergy* alarm'd the People with Chimera's of their Own : Then exorbitant Grants, standing Armies, Massacre of *Glenco*, advancing of Foreigners, Partition Treaty, carrying away the Money, building Magnificent Houses abroad, while the Royal Palace lay in Ruins at home, giying

Ad-

Advantage in Commerce to the *Dutch*, and a Thousand such Things as these were the Subject of the other Party's Railery and Complaint.

By these Complaints They frequently made Interest in the Nation ; brought about their Parties alternately to a *Majority* in the *House*, and by that Means made their Way to the *SCEPTER*. This was the Reason why in that single Reign the *SCEPTER* chang'd Hands oftner, than had been known to be done in some Ages before ; and the Hands, who had the Management of it longest, were at last so oppress'd by Numbers, as to be brought to the Bar of the House of Lords for *Misconduct*, be impeach'd by the *Commons*, and some of them try'd.

The King unable to direct his Ministers in Action, and less to Protect them when call'd to Account for it, saw Himself weakened by these Things, in such a Manner, that He scarce knew where to commit the *SCEPTER*, and much less how to keep it himself, being twice driven to subject *Himself*, *SCEPTER* and *All*, to the Clamours of the Parties whom He had depos'd, and comply in the meanest Demands : As in the Case of the disbanding the Army, where His *Majesty* stoop'd almost to a *Petitioning* his People to allow Him his Blue Guards, and was deny'd.

Then

Then in the Case of the Act of Re-assumption, where He was oblig'd to see the Rewards, which He had bestow'd upon his Generals and Officers, who had spent their Blood, and hazarded their Lives in the Reduction of *Ireland*, taken away from them again by the P——t, and some of the greatest Men of the Age left to starve in the Nation they had conquer'd by their Valour.

This was the Effect of the *S C E P T E R*'s being separated from the *Crown*, and of the prevailing Power of a Party, who never left pressing the King, till They got the Deputation of the *S C E P T E R* into their own Hands, and thereby the Power to do more foolish Things than those, whom They had complain'd of before: For whenever a New Party got the *S C E P T E R* into their Hands, They presently took Care to satisfie the World that the raising their private Fortunes was the Sum of their Designs; and that as for the Publick, it was fated to be a Prey to the Ministers, and to give Room to the New Ones to do just the same Thing that Others had done before them.

In this Posture of Affairs the King dy'd, leaving the *S C E P T E R* in the Hands of the same Party, which the Queen, as it is thought, would have put it into, if she had found it otherwise; so that it is observable

servable there were fewer Alterations at Court, than is usual on a new Accession to the Crown.

If the *SCEPTER* was put into Commission, *as has been observ'd*, during the Reign of the former Kings, it was much more rational to expect it would be so now ; and that a Woman being on the Throne, both *SWORD* and *SCEPTER* would be put into the Hands of the Ministers of State, and so it came to pass.

The first Measures the Managers of the *SCEPTER* took on the Queen's Accession, were to put all the Slur upon the Ministry of the late King, who had gone before them, that it was possible for them to do ; and therefore the first Language which we met with from them, and which all their Publick Addresses, or Applications to the Queen were fill'd with, tended to reproach the preceding Reign ; and abounding with Gasconades, and High-flying Flourishes of what They would do to retrieve the Honour of the Nation, intimating that the Nation had suffer'd in that Point, by the Administration of those who had gone before them. How well they made good what They pretended to in these Things, we shall see further in this History.

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The *S C E P T E R*, as is said, was now in Deputation ; the E—— of N—— and Sir *Charles Hedges* were Principal Secretaries of State ; the Lord G—— Lord High Treasurer ; the Marquis of N—— Privy Seal ; Sir N—— W—— Lord Keeper ; Sir *Edward Seymour* Comptroler of the Houshold, and all were of those call'd *High-Church* at that Time, and most of them such as were left in the Administration by the King. But in their Management of the *S C E P T E R*, they acted with such an unaccountable Warmth to their Party-Interest, and began such a furious Prosecution against all those who differ'd from them, either in Religious or Politick Principles, that they soon fell out with One another, and brought Themselves into Contempt with the whole Nation.

The Clergy now began to preach up their *Old Doctrine of Hereditary Right and Passive Obedience* ; and on Pretence of establishing the Church of *England*, cast all the Invectives out, which they could invent against the Management of the *S C E P T E R* in the preceding Reign ; calling King *William* a *Presbyterian*, and an Enemy to the Church ; and as the first Prop to restore Religion, They brought on the Bill against the *Occasional Conformity* of Dissenters ; which, if they had not been

been too presuming, in the Opinion of their own Ability, to carry upon their own Terms, they might have obtain'd; but insisting upon Trifles with the Peers, they resolv'd to have *All* or *None*, and so lost the Bill.

Yet their differing with one another sooner broke them, than their differing with the Dissenters; for while the Statesmen pursu'd different Measures, it was impossible they should go far together. These were of Opinion, that a fiery Zeal against Dissenters was the only Way to establish'd the *Church*, as being the Means to build Her up upon the Ruin of Her Enemies. Those were of Opinion, that the Christian Religion was not to be preserv'd by Persecution of *Protestants*, and that Dissenters had a Civil Right to the Liberty they enjoy'd; and tho' they might be restrain'd, ought not to be oppress'd, much less to be ruin'd for their Consciences.

The Queen, who wish'd that all her Subjects might joyn together in Peace and Union, and was desirous to extend as well her Favour as her Protection to them all, press'd the *Politicians* to agree, and to unite, that She might be the General Mother of them All: But, alas! The *S C E P T E R* was out of Her Hands; and it was for Her Majesty to act by the former

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Rules, *viz.* That as the Majority guided in P——t, so the Court steer'd in Proportion; and the Moderate Party seeming to get the Better there, by twice rejecting the *Occasional Bill*, They got the Better also at *Court*, and the *SCEPTER* into their Hands for the first Time.

It must not be omitted here, that at this Turn, several of the principal People of the former Party, finding Moderate Councils prevail, came over to the Measures of the Moderate Men, and have been since so confirm'd in the Goodness of their Choice, that they continu'd faithful to the best Principles, and have been esteem'd as the greatest *Whigs* in the Kingdom; and some of them remain so to this Day, or at least remain'd so to the Time of their Death; These are the late Lord G——, his Grace the Duke of M—— and several others.

The *SCEPTER* was now in the Hands of the *Whigs*, or if you please in the Hands of the Moderate Men: The Queen, who had never till Now had any Experience of that sort of People, except a little, and that not much to their Advantage at the Time of the Revolution, and who had differ'd with them pretty much, upon several Occasions, in the Reign of Her Predecessor, yet began to be very well pleas'd with the Management of the

SCEP-

S C E P T E R : The People express'd abundance of Satisfaction in the Choice Her Majesty had made ; and which is not usual in Matters of Government, the Nation seem'd generally to joyn in the Favours Her Majesty bestow'd on Her Ministers, and thought nothing too Good, or too Great for them.

As an Addition to the Felicity of this Administration, *Heaven* joyn'd with Her Majesty ; and concurring with the Measures, bless'd Her Arms with Victory, and Her Councils with Success, in such a Manner, as History cannot give Examples of the like, in any Reign since the Conquest. A Chain of such Victories attended our Arms against *France*, as the like have not been heard of : And at Home, the Union with *Scotland* was a Transaction, which as no Age before, notwithstanding frequent Attempts, could bring to Perfection, so the Age in which it was wrought stood amaz'd, and it looks like a Dream ; the insuperable Difficulties, which appear'd in the Attempt, having made the most thinking, understanding Men, both at Home and Abroad, look on it as impracticable.

It must be granted, That in the Administration of these Men, both the *SWORD* and the *S C E P T E R* were manag'd to the greatest Advantage to this Nation that could possibly be ; and that Her Majesty

seem'd to have nothing to do but to wear Her *Crown*, which was daily adorn'd with New Trophies ; it sat Easie upon Her Head ; *She* had the *Glories* of it without the *Cares* ; and if ever Prince may be said to part the *SCEPTER* and the *SWORD* from the *CROWN* to Advantage, it was the Queen.

The Glory of the *British* Nation encreas'd Abroad, and the Credit of it encreas'd at Home ; nay, some have gone so far as to say, That notwithstanding the vast Expence of the War, the general Stock of the Nation encreas'd, and we grew rich by our Commerce : Whether we may go that length or not, we shall not venture to say ; but this must be acknowledg'd, That the War was not only well carry'd on Abroad, but was well supported at Home ; the vast Sums demanded were chearfully supply'd by the People : And albeit much has been said, since that, of Misapplication, and diverting the Publick Treasure, of carrying on Private Interests, aggrandizing Families, &c. So little has been found of that kind, and Publick Justice has been so little concern'd in calling to Account any, who have been so charg'd, that Posterity will be very backward to believe the Charge.

And yet were all true, that has been said, of Men's carrying on their Private Interest,

Interest, aggrandizing their Families, wasting of immense Treasures, of their Ambition, their Avarice; *and the like*; yet while this must be acknowledg'd, That they did the Nation's Busines, purfu'd the Publick Interest faithfully and vigorously, and rais'd our Glory to the highest Pitch Abroad, that it was ever at in the World, and likewise our Credit at Home; this must drown the Pretences of the other, and this History must record it to their *Praise*, That the *S C E P T E R* in its divided Station from the *Crown*, was never better manag'd, than in their Hands, since it was the Fashion for Princes to commit the *S C E P T E R* to the Conduct of Servants.

But all the Advantages which They reap'd to themselves, by having the *S C E P T E R* above Seven Years in their Hands, and all the Advantages, which the Kingdom reap'd by their Good Management were lost, or very much lessen'd; the Queen continually disquieted and made uneasy, and the whole Kingdom miserably divided, and embroil'd by the constant Factions and Breaches among the Statesmen, picquing at one another, forming Cabals, and dividing into Parties against One another; continually accusing One another to the Queen, and which was worse, still abusing One another by Libels and

printed

printed Papers to the Nation ; the Foundation of all their Quarrels being chiefly upon this One Question, *viz.* Who should get the *S C E P T E R* into their Hands : And in these Breaches our History shall chiefly pursue those Parts, which were least known to the Publick, and made least Noise, pursuing thereby the Design mentioned in the Title of a *Secret History*.

The first Step in which our Managers of the *S C E P T E R* divided during the Reign of her late Majesty, was in the Case of the *Occasional Bill*, where the Arcana of the Quarrel were as remote from the Pretences of it, as two Contraries may be supposed to be ; by which Means the common People being amused with the Debate about *Church* and *Dissenter*, employ'd their Speculations, about the Justice or Injustice of restraining the *Dissenters*, about the Nature of the Toleration ; what was, or was not to be esteem'd Persecution, and such like Theological Debates, not making the least Guess at the true Design which was carrying on at Court, which in brief was nothing but a meer Project to dispossess my Lord N—— Sir Edward Seymour and the High-flying Party, and get the *S C E P T E R* out of their Hands, without any sincere Zeal, either for the Church, as was pretended on the one Hand, or for the preserving the Toleration, which was as warmly

ly alledg'd to be the Intention on the other Hand : Nor does our History injure either Side, in saying the Statesmen on both Sides rowed quite another Way, than they look'd, and *equally juggled with the Church and with the Dissenters*, crying up their Zeal to their respective Parties, when in brief all the Case was, who should get the *S C E P T E R.*

The *Queen*, a Lady of excellent Disposition, and of exemplar Piety, was perhaps in this, as in all the subsequent Breaches among the Parties, the greatest Sufferer ; Her Majesty's Name being inscrib'd to the Measures of whatsoever Party had the *S C E P T E R.* : And such an unexampled Treatment of the *Queen*, as it could not be conceal'd, so neither can it be deny'd : Either Side in their Turn committed this Assault upon her Majesty, and had their Share in male-treating Her, for what She was as innocent of, as She is now of the Follies we commit, when She is in her Grave.

When the *High-Church* had the *S C E P T E R* Her Majesty bore the Reproach of all their Follies : The other People blam'd the Queen for falling upon the Toleration, giving up some of her Subjects to be devour'd by the other, and setting the *Clergy* to persecute their fellow Christians, from whom they did not pretend to differ in any essential Article, or whom they could not charge

charge with any fundamental Error. They began to call the *Queen* cruel, the Thing of all the wicked Things in the World remotest from her Temper ; and her *Reign* Tyranny, tho' Her Majesty, as mild and merciful as ever Prince was, rather suffer'd under the Tyranny of Her Statesmen, than acted any Thing tyrannical Her self. But Losers claim to be the Complainers, the Dissenters being threaten'd, cry'd out as if they had actually suffer'd Persecution, and the Queen bore the Scandal of every Grievance, who-ever was the Cause of it.

In the Process of this Debate the *Low-Church* got the *S C E P T E R*, and as Moderate Councils prevail'd, and the *Occasional Bills* were thrown out, the *High-Church-Men* rais'd an hideous cry, about the Safety or Danger of the *Church*.

The *Queen*, whose Zeal for the *Church* was not to be question'd, upon any Pretence whatever, no, not by Her worst Enemies, thought She had given such evident Testimonies of Her sincere Affection, and firm adherence to the Interest of the *Church*, as might convince any Men in the World, and was perfectly surpriz'd to find, That because She was willing in Compassion to the Tender Consciences of Dissenters, and in Discharge of Her Assurances given at Her Accession to the *Crown*, of Her Gracious Protection, and Her

Her Care of the Toleration, She should be suspected of betraying and abandoning the *Church of England*. And Her Majesty could not refrain expressing Her Resentment at the Conduct of those Men, who had brought this upon Her, and this threw them out of the Saddle, and gave the *Low Party* this Advantage, to wring the *SCEPTER* out of the Hands, which indeed was the utmost End of all their Design; for as it was with the *Other*, so it was with *Them*, the *Publick Good* was the pretended, but all the Strife was, who should get the *SCEPTER*.

Now tho' this ill Treatment of the Queen was partly the Reason of the removing the *SCEPTER*, (and they might have seen their Mistake in their Punishment) yet had they not the Prudence to retrieve it, but went on to convince the Queen of the Necessity there was of keeping them out, when they were out, by carrying those Reproaches on Her Majesty to an unusual height, and so making that the Matter of Her Choice, which was before only done, as an *Act of Necessity*.

Nothing could be more afflictive to Her Majesty, than to hear these Men reproach Her with want of Affection to the *Church*: A Thing, which of all Others, She thought was impossible any of Her Subjects should charge Her with; and in which, if She

might expect any Reproach, it must have been the Reverse of that, and a Charge of Zeal might be brought, nearer approaching to the other Extream. Not, that the Queen was possess'd with that, which they call *Bigotry*, either of the Kind which belong'd to Her Father, or any of Her Predecessors; yet She had, on so many Occasions, given Testimony of Her Zeal for the *Church*, and Her Affection to the *Clergy*, that as the Reproach was unexpected, so it went very near to Her Majesty; and when an *insolent Lampoon* was shew'd Her, which upbraided Her here-with, it was observ'd Her Majesty was more than ordinarily concern'd at it; the Lines ended thus;

*But now She's Mother of the Church,
She has left Her Daughter in the Lurch.*

It was observ'd, that at the reading these Lines, the Queen's Countenance alter'd; and when the Dutches of —, famous for regarding no *Church* or *Religion*, but her Pleasure, attempted to put it off with a *prophane Jest*, the Queen let fall some Tears, and retir'd into Her Closet.

Had any One seen this, that had been touch'd with a Sense of the Queen's Temper, and had the least Affection for Her Person, They must have been more than ordina-

ordinarily mov'd with it. But this was not the only Time, when Her Majesty discover'd Herself surpriz'd, that any of Her Subjects should suspect Her Zeal, or the Sincerity of Her Affections to the *Church of England*: And therefore the Noise, which was then rais'd about the Danger of the *Church*, was very displeasing to Her Majesty, as may be gather'd from those Words of Her Speech to the Parliament, viz. *And some have had the Insolence to suggest, That the Church of England was in Danger under my Administration*; an Expression signifying, That Her Majesty thought it monstrous, as well as undutiful, for any of Her Subjects to suggest such a Thing, after such Testimonies, as Her Majesty had given of Her Zeal for the *Church*.

And indeed it was no less, as many of those very People came afterwards to acknowledge; when that very Zeal of Her Majesty for the *Church* was the only Thing, that prevented the Ruin of Dr. *Sacheverel*, for whom Her Majesty shew'd a particular Concern; not that the Person pleaded at all in his Favour, but that the Royal Tenderness for his Office, as a Minister of the *Church of England* was such, as Her Majesty could not bear to see him punish'd; no, not as She was satisfy'd *He deserv'd*.

All this Her Majesty suffer'd for Her Zeal to a Moderate Administration; and during the whole Time that the *S C E P - T E R* was in these Hands, we find Her Majesty not only in Publick Speeches, but on all Private Occasions, pressing all Her Subjects, and all Her Servants to *Moderation, Peace and Union*, and urging them to agree among themselves, that the Publick Peace and Prosperity of Her Subjects might not be obstructed.

In the Interval of this Conduct, as an undeniable Evidence of Her Majesty's Affection to that Moderation and Union, which She pres'd Her People to at Home; She had that eminent Occasion of improving it Abroad, viz. By the uniting Her Two Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland* into one Nation; a Transaction, which as it shall always be nam'd to Posterity, by the Name of Queen *Anne*, so the Zeal, which the Queen express'd on all Occasions, not only for the doing it, but for the having it *finish'd in Her Reign*, was the Effort of Her meer Disposition to a general Quiet, to a reducing the Minds of all Her People to a general Calm, and to propagate, as much as in Her lay, the Peace and Union of *all Mankind*: And if there are Objections to be made against the precipitant making a *General Peace* Abroad; putting an End to the War with

France,

France, when that apparent Probability of Success had put *Europe* in Hopes of effectually reducing *France*, the entring into which is not the present Subject; yet it cannot be deny'd, but that Disposition which Her Majesty always shew'd to Peace, Her Aversion to the Effusion of Blood, and Her Earnest Desires to leave Her Kingdoms in Peace, might joyn with the subtil Perswasions of those, who then had the *S C B P T E R* in their Hands, and might assist to lead Her into their Error; but of this more may be said in its Place.

However, the Queen's Disposition, as is said, led Her Majesty to prefis Her People to Peace and Union; yet Her Majesty had not the Felicity to meet with Success, suitable to the Sincerity of Her Designs, the Union with *Scotland* excepted; which, as some have said, was carry'd on rather upon Political Grounds, and to answer the pressing Instances of the Queen Herself, *who, for ought we know, was the only Person, that had no corrupt View in it,* than from any, the People, who manag'd it, had to promote the general Good of both Kingdoms by it.

Yet no sooner was this Great Transaction finish'd, and the P——t compos'd of both Nations united, came to sit, but the Emulation of the Courtiers, the Uneasiness of those out of Play, and the Discontents,

tents, which during the Treaty of Union lay asleep, began to break out afresh.

It is an Incident too well known, and of so recent Memory, that the reciting the Particulars might seem needless: But something may usefully be spoken thereof, because the Flame broke out so near the *Crown*, and so sensibly affected the *Queen Herself*.

Various were the Causes of these Breaches, and manag'd by various Persons, whose Pretences had their several Glosses spread over them, to render them plausible; but for ought that could be seen by those, that look'd on with unbyass'd and unprejudic'd Thoughts, the End of them all was much the same, *viz.* To get the *SCEPTER* into their Hands.

Some charg'd the Ministry with Male-Administration, wasting the Publick Treasure, and aggrandizing themselves.

Some of the Ministry themselves charg'd one another with secret Misrepresenting Things to the Queen, and Attempts to supplant their Superiors in Her Majesty's Favour, and of a visible Design upon the *SCEPTER*, which Charge was carry'd to that height, that Her Majesty, if possible, to preserve Peace among Her Courtiers, yielded, tho' more against Her Inclination, than perhaps She ever did any Thing of that Kind in Her Life, to part with

with the Man, of whom She had then a rising Opinion, which increas'd by that Incident to such a Degree, as did afterwards declare in his Favour, to the supplanting them all.

My Lord H——— in several Speeches, and which his Lordship took the Liberty to publish, plainly attack'd the greatest Man in the Ministry, with some Things, which we have not yet heard, that He was ever confuted in.

After the displacing of the Ministry above-mention'd, Her Majesty found Herself not one Step nearer the Tranquility, which She desir'd, than before ; for they were scarce settled in full Possession of the **S C E P T E R**, and thought it was impossible for any other Thing, or Person to disturb them ; but a Breach more furious, and which had like to have been more fatal, than any before it, happen'd among the *Ministers themselves*.

This was, when some of the *Whigs* thought fit to fall upon the Administration of the late Lord Treasurer G—— and the D. of M——, wherein it was apparent, That whatever was the pretended Ground of that Breach, and how plausible soever those Pretences were made to appear ; yet that only true, original Cause, was the fore-mention'd Question, viz. Who shou'd have the **S C E P T E R**.

And

And if we may credit the Authors of some Pamphlets, written at that Time, the Objections which were rais'd at that Time against the Ministry, had as little Honesty and Principle in them, as ever Things of that Kind have been accompany'd with; and that some of the Persons concern'd in them, have since acknowledg'd, and made Satisfaction for the Mistake.

The Breach gave the Queen great Distaste, and the more, because Her Majesty saw evidently, That the Quarrel was for the *S C E P T E R*: And that however Male-Administration of Her Ministers, and the Safety of Her Person and Government, were made use of, as the covering to the Fraud, yet all the End was but to dispossess those Two Great Ministers, and get the *S C E P T E R* into their own Hands. There is no Question, but this gave the Queen such a Prejudice at some particular Persons, as that it was never thoroughly wip'd off; albeit Her Majesty was prevail'd with to receive them into Favour again afterwards for a while.

The *S C E P T E R* stood its Ground fast and firm Two Years after this; but the Old Sores having been but superficially heal'd, broke out afresh with more Inveteracy, than before: And to avoid entering into the rest of the Particulars, it is sufficient

ent to say, That the Queen, having been distasted, as above, at Persons, and at their Conduct also, the *S C E P T E R* totter'd for a while in the Hands of those, who had held it *so long*, and at length shift-ed into the Hands, which the Queen had been prevail'd with, so much a_z inst Her Inclination, to dispossess before; and they who had refus'd to share the *S C E P T E R* with the Man they oppos'd, were oblig'd to resign it wholly to him; and this they did with so much Reluctance, as shew'd they would leave no Stone unturn'd to re-cover their Hold, and once more to get the *S C E P T E R* out of his Hand.

What powerful Opposition the *S C E P T E R* met with, and how all Attempts to perswade the People, who had lost it, to acquiesce in Her Majesty's Pleasure prov'd ineffectual; how vigorously, and a long Time successfully the Hands who had gotten the *S C E P T E R*, maintain'd it against the Opposition above-mention'd, and how at last they also fell out among themselves, as their Predecessors had done before them, and upon the same Account, viz. *To get the S C E P T E R from One another*, These Things remain to make up the latter Part of this History.

There are, who affirm, and there seems much Probability in it, that when the New Managers first got Possession of the

S C E P T E R, they had no other View than of managing it in the same Manner, and by the same Measures, which those had taken, who had gone before them : That they had no Intention of making *an Hasty and Dangerous Peace* : That they had no Design of introducing a *Jacobite Party*, into any Share of the Administration, and committing the *S C E P T E R* to those who were Enemies to the *Crown* : And hence they say it was, That in the beginning of this New Turn of the *S C E P T E R*, the Queen made frequent mention in Her Speeches to the P—t of Her Resolution to carry on the War with Vigour ; of Her not being satisfy'd with any Thing short of the whole Monarchy of *Spain* ; of continuing the War, till Satisfaction was obtain'd for all Her Allies, and Expressions of the like Nature, which we have seen, in the subsequent Management of the *S C E P T E R*, not to be so much regarded, as we think they ought to have been.

We cannot question, but when Her Majesty spoke these Things, She had no other Thought, than of proceeding in such Measures, as were proper to bring these Things to pass ; otherwise we must entertain Thoughts, very unworthy of Her Majesty, who was *a most Pious, Religious, Upright Person*. Nay, we cannot but encline to believe with those People, we mention'd

tion'd above, that the New Managers were at that Time engag'd in no Measures, but which corresponded, with what the *Queen* had declar'd to be Her Resolution, as above.

But say those, who plead thus in behalf of these Men, the Opposition, which the New Managers of the *S C E P T E R* met with from the Old Ones, and from the strong Party, which was made against them in the House of C——s, was such and so great, that they saw evidently, if the War was carry'd on, they should be brought to a Plunge; and the Queen being embarrass'd, either by want of Money, or want of Credit, or want of Success, would be driven to the Necessity of taking the *S C E P T E R* out of their Hands again; and that rather than be driven to this Exigence, they found themselves oblig'd to take in the Assistance of those, whom they had no Design to joyn with; and by the Aid of these Confederates, to bring the War to a Conclusion, ridding their Hands of that Burthen; and that then the *S C E P T E R* would be more easie to manage: This was more Evident from the Words of a Great Minister of that Time, who being ask'd, if he was not surpriz'd at the general Concert of the *Whigs*, and their standing off, with such Obstinacy, from an Accommodation; No,

no, says he, They only oblige me to make Use of other Hands, which, if it had not been their own Fault, I would not have done.

As this is related from other Mouths, and as the Opinion of some, who perhaps would extenuate the Error of the late Managers, so this History contenting it self with the relating it Historically, enters not into the Enquiry, whether this be a justifiable Excuse, for the said Managers, or for thoſe, who oppoſ'd them either: Let the Readers judge in that Case for themselves; but this brings our History to make mention of a Time, when that happen'd, which we hope, shall never be Great Britain's Circumſtance again, viz. That the SCEPTER by these Means came to be committed too much, to the Power and Guidance of thoſe, who, *as before*, were Enemies to the Crown, viz. *That the Friends of the Pretender had too near a Concern in the Management of the Administration*; and ſome People were not without their Fears, that in time that they might get the SCEPTER wholly into their Hands, and then how eaſy it might be to get the Crown alſo, they did not know. This ſeems to be the true, and indeed only Ground for the Apprehenſions of Danger, as to the Protestant Succeſſion of Hanover: For how could the People of Britain be without Uneaſineſs,

when

when they saw the *S C E P T E R* so much in the Hands of *Jacobites*; or to speak favourably, the Men, in whose Hands the *S C E P T E R* was intrusted, carrying on the Administration under the Influence of *Jacobite Councils*, and by the Assistance of such as were known to be notorious *Jacobites*, both in Principle and Practice; such as the *D*— of *A*—, the *E*— of *M*—, the well known *L*— of *C*—, the *D*— of *B*—, *H*— and many others, whom it boots not to name.

The Managers of the *S C E P T E R* were not ignorant of this, and would gladly have shifted Hands; but they saw no *third Party* to take by the Hand: The People they had displac'd, refus'd them, and made an Interest too strong against them; so that the *Chief Minister* could never think it safe, to quit the Hold he had of the *Jacobite Interest*, having no Party to turn to, that could support him against the obstinate People, who had declar'd themselves irreconcilable, and full of immoveable Resentments. Whether they did well or ill, in rejecting thus all manner of Accommodation with the *S C E P T E R*, is not the present Business to enquire, the Issue has prov'd them to be more in the right, than many wise men believ'd then at that Time to be. But it has always been thought, that the

Success

Success of any Thing is the meanest Argument to justifie the Wisdom of it.

But the Issue of these Things produc'd another Event, which the Enemies of the Managers of the *S C E P T E R* did not foresee ; and which perhaps, if it had not happen'd, the Victory of the *Whigs*, over the *S C E P T E R*, had not been so compleat, as it now appears to be : For the Managers aforesaid being brought to a full Stop, at the Point above-mention'd, fell to *the most foolish, and to them fatal*, Division, which could be possible among themselves ; by which they not only disconcerted their own Measures, threw up all the Advantages, which their Victory over the Opposers of the *S C E P T E R* had given them, but laid themselfes open to an inevitable Overthrow, as shall appear in the Sequel of this Story.

The chief Manager of the *S C E P T E R*, as has been said, had been oblig'd to take by the Hand a Set of Men, who, it was evident, had Designs in their Heads, *Fatal* to the *Succession* in the House of *H A N O V E R*.

Charity bids us suppose, what we find the Advocates of that Minister's Conduct advanc'd in his Defence, *viz.* That he believ'd himself capable to preserve the *S C E P T E R* from the Influence of those Men, as *Jacobites*, and that he should only

ly serve himself of them ; resolving, upon any Exigence, to cast them off, and stick to the *Protestant Succession* ; and we are the more enclin'd to think favourably of him in that Particular, because of his *drawing out*, or being *cast off* from the Management of the *SCEPTER* afterwards, by a Party less scrupulous in running Lengths, and less reserv'd, as to what Advances they made to the *Jacobite Interest*, than he had been. But be this as it will, the Difficulties he found himself plung'd in upon that Occasion, were not a Few.

He had try'd all the Arts, his well known Capacity furnish'd him with, to make his Peace with those, whom he had dispossess'd ; but whether it was, that they thought themselves so ill us'd, as that they could not master their own Resentments, or that they had any Assurance of a Conquest over his Measures, or that, as they allow'd, they saw Reason not to depend upon the Assurances, which from Time to Time he gave them of his Sincerity, or whether every one of these had a Share in the Resolutions of that Party, not to joyn with him in any Thing, is not certain ; but this is certain, *viz.* That being refus'd here, he was daily besieg'd with the Importunities of another Party, in the Administration, *To set up other Management*
of

of the SCEPTER, as the only Way to preserve it in their Hands, and to prevent the Whigs, who daily grew stronger and stronger, from breaking in upon them, by the Looseness of their Conduct.

They told him, That since all Ways had been try'd to accommodate Matters with the Whigs, and that every Step had prov'd ineffectual, they must resolve to act in a more Vigorous Manner, and declare themselves freely and openly to those, who were able to stand by them; That the Church Party were always able to Support, both the SCEPTER, and the Crown also; and that it was for Want of giving sufficient Assurances to the Church, that the SCEPTER was run down in the Manner, as it was: They propos'd to him to make, what they call'd, a thorough Reformation; and to purge the Army, Navy and Court of every Whig, that was left in it. This, they said, would convince the Church-Men, so they call'd the High-flying Party, which they resolv'd to bring in, That he was in Earnest, and sincerely in their Interest; whereas by his acting thus upon the Reserve with them, they had no Confidence in Him; and that many believ'd, that he had a warm Side to the Whigs still, and would one Time or another, betray the SCEPTER into the Hands of the Whig.



